Howell, W B L [Principal, Collegiate Institute, Port Arthur,] Jan, Feb. 1916
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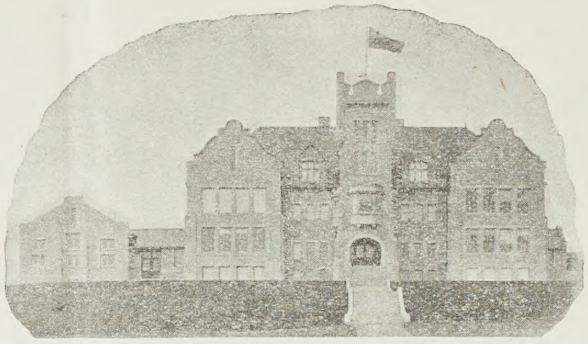
SECRETARY-TREASURER BOARD OF EDUCATION



W. B. L. HOWELL, B. A.
PRINCIPAL

THE COLLEGIATE INSTITUTE

PORT ARTHUR, ONT. Jan 24th., 1916

Dr. Falconer,

President, Toronto University,

Toronto, Ont.

Dear Sir:-

In last week's issue of the ' Varsity ' appears an article by a Prof. V. E. Henderson under the title ' Facts and Figures'. He concludes his article with the following insulting and uncalled-for Statement:- ' The University population next year will consist of w women, the medically unfit, and a few slackers, men whom no gifts of white feathers will send to the front.'

Now I do not know which of the above-mentioned three classes this Prof. Henderson belongs to, but I am vitally interested in knowing whether this article of his meets with your approval, and whether this gentleman is to be permitted by the University authorities without protest to make statements so utterly at variance with the facts and so calculated to work injury to the University in the eyes of all sane and self-respecting students and of their parents who are striving to give their sons an education.

I have a son in attendance at the University, and I am making a very considerable sacrifice to give him an education. This lad of mine is an honest, hard-working, conscientious boy , and one who

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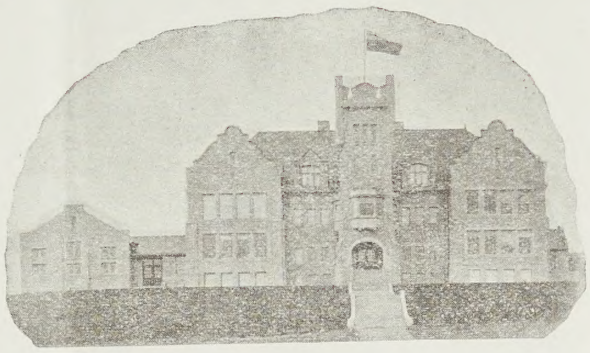

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~~and he~~ is certainly no 'slacker.' He has been very anxious to enlist, but I have forbidden him to do so until he completes his second year in the Faculty of App. Science. I have advised him that it is far better to try to complete his two years and in the meantime to get his military training and secure his lieutenancy, and that if the war continues he will be needed far worse then than now and will be thoroughly trained and mature enough to accept the responsibility of his command should he secure his commision as I expect him to do. He is now taking the C. O. T. C. course and is one of the 'Proficients' under the new classification in the corps. Knowing him as I do, I am quite sure I would not allow him to return to Varsity next year to complete his second year in Science under the imputation that he is a coward and a slacker. He feels very sorely now that I would not allow him to go to England to train for a lieutenantcy in the Imperial service, and it would be intolerable that he should return to be subjected to the insults of men of the mental calibre of this man Henderson.

I have, however , promised him that he may go when he completes his second year, when he will be twenty-one. As matters now stand I feel that he cannot return with any degree of self-respect to Varsity under present conditions and that this year is wasted, as a first year standing in App. Sci. gives him no basis to make his living by, whereas

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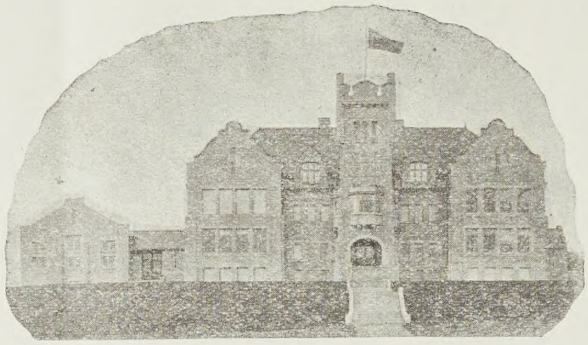

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a two years' course completes, as it were, a definite stage.

We have several boys in attendance at our school who have been intending to enter the University next year, but now that we know how matters stand, I am of the opinion that they and their parents should be told how they are to be considered if they come to Toronto. Before advising them of the trend of Mr. Henderson's remarks, however, I shall look for the favor of a reply from you as to whether his remarks meet with the approval of yourself and the other Professors and the University authorities generally. If the stand he has taken meets with very general approval at the University, I am of the opinion that the parents of all students in attendance at the University as well as of all prospective students and the High School teachers of the country should be made familiar with his article; and further that the University should not accept the fees of any students who are next year fit for military service.

Awaiting the favor of a reply at your earliest convenience, I am

yours very respectfully,

B. A. (Tor.)'93.

February 3rd, 1916

Principal W. B. L. Howell, B.A.,
Collegiate Institute,
Port Arthur.

Dear Mr. Howell:

I have a letter which I assume comes from you though it is not signed referring to an article in "Varsity" entitled "Facts and Figures" by Professor W. B. Henderson.

Professor Henderson's article was written by himself on his own responsibility and cannot be taken as setting forth the official attitude of the University. Our position in the University from the beginning has been to explain to the students as clearly as we can the extremely grave condition in which we find ourselves in the present war: to urge upon them the necessity of deciding each one for himself what duty he can perform in the present war for his country in such a crisis. I believe that it is our duty to set these clearly and strongly before the student. The educated classes of the community who receive more from it than any other portion of the community through their education have a right to understand these issues thoroughly, and they bear a very heavy responsibility for their issue. As a result of this I am glad to say that a large number of our students have undertaken to go on active service or will do so shortly. We recognise at the same time that there are some students who for reasons of health or some entirely honourable causes are unable to make this decision

. These students must of course be received by us without any

imputation such as Dr. Henderson has placed in his letter. I hope that next winter those students who are with us because in coming they have followed the line of duty will discover that we treat them without any imputation of dishonour.

I have spoken to Professor Henderson about the letter, and he regrets that he put the matter in one paragraph as he did. He informs me that he intends to write to "Varsity" again and in such a way as will not be offensive to those who stay at home.for just and proper reasons.

I may say that Professor Henderson who is in the Faculty of Medicine will be leaving for the front very shortly in all probability. With kind regards, I am,

Yours sincerely,

President.